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obnoxious features of the French woman. Climate and other influences have not given to the French woman the plucky substantiality, which is the basis of the strong practical energy, and of the weak, blunted, sensibilities of the English woman. The French woman possesses admirable gifts of taste, tact, fancy, keen womanly sensibilities, and even active kindness, and their supremacy in these beautiful qualities entitles them to the warmest commendation.

THE COMPREHENSIVENESS OF ART.

To many the phrase "Fine Arts" suggests but a very limited meaning, and that rather of effeminate embellishment than anything of valuable or practicable benefit; it conveys to some, perhaps, only the idea of the completed works of sculptors and painters, with the sensuous pleasure derivable from them—but in no degree symbolizing to them the extensive knowledge, the wide adaptation, the moral suggestiveness which lies latent, or is fully developed in each single specimen of genuine Art; much less, of that wider circle of uses, to which the study of Art may be made subservient—the apparently remote, but really near connection it holds to our daily life; and the diverse sciences, a knowledge of which must enter into, and, in fact, form the basis of all true connoisseurship, or executive ability in any department of Art.

But the terms "Art" and "Fine Arts," like many others, expand in meaning as our knowledge of them increases, and we see their applicability to numerous subjects, which conventionally lie quite beyond their pale. The reason of this deficient application is not because of any natural incongruity, but because reflection, sustained by custom, has not yet united under the same generic term, subjects which have a real and near affinity. To the original trinity of the Fine Arts—music, painting, and sculpture—there has been added, but within a brief period only, landscape gardening, which is certainly as genuine a subject of Art as any for which Nature can furnish the materials, or through which the taste and genius of man can invent, combine, or develop beauty. We shall hereafter notice some of the more common and domestic uses to which the domain of Art ought to be extended, but now desire to draw attention to the largeness of the sphere which Art occupies, and to the comprehensive knowledge and the liberal culture demanded even in the amateurship of Art.

It is surely not enough on which to base a favorable critical judgment of a painting or piece of sculpture, that it satisfies the eye or even suggests a moral or intellectual theme for thought. To make our opinion of any real value, we may be called upon by every just rule of criticism to verify some abstruse point in history, or the measure of our acquaintance with the social or public life of buried nationalities—in painting, with the laws of meteorology, geology, botany, or anatomy, and still more frequently are we required to prove the true connection

between psychological passion, and the artist's physiological rendering of it. Here we begin to see how wide a range of subjects may be embraced in one small work of Art. In fact, representative Art is broad as Nature herself; for what phase of Nature is there, animate or inanimate, but may become the subject of the artist's pencil, and how shall they who have never made her their study be competent judges of the truth of her portraiture?

But to come to specialities: take any historical picture, as, for instance, "The Decadence of Rome," in which a party of voluptuaries are seen feasting in the very temples where the Cæsars and Catos of antiquity stand in the niches of the walls, with their severe and stony eyes, apparently rebuking the excesses, and grieving over the approaching ruin of the State. See in this one picture how much minute, historical, antiquarian, and anatomical knowledge is required, either to produce or judge of it. First, in relation to the building—the interior architecture, the stones of the walls, the mouldings and ornaments, the statuary, the make of the furniture, the patterns on the cloths and cushions; the dresses, the different materials and mode of wearing, the characteristic varieties in the figures and physiognomies of the waiting slaves and their lords; and the purely physical beauty of the females who are participating in the vinous banquet; even the slightest failure in depicting correctly the ornaments of these latter, would betray at once a fatal ignorance as to the state of the Arts in that era at Rome; then there are the table utensils, the flowers in the vases and on the heads of the females, all of these have, or should have, a local and chronological character; and above all, as indicative of the genius of the painter, we have to look into the separate countenances of this mixed company, for the general truthfulness of the design, to see what were the kind of men who sold their proud birthright of Roman citizens for the miserable pottage of unrestrained indulgence in luxury and sensuality: we have, too, still retaining the national physiognomy, to detect in each countenance the predominant passion of the life, tempered by that of the hour; and finally, to compare them with the stately sternness of their ancient censors, who yet seem instinct with indignation at the effeminacy and sensuality of their abandoned posterity. The study of all the particulars necessary to the faithful delineation of this single scene, might well be the work of years; nor can a superficial student of history or of human nature be competent to speak with authority on the correctness of the general design, much less on the success or failure of the minutiae of the work.

Still more is the necessity for a large and varied knowledge seen in other branches of Art, where the truth-loving student finds himself continually driven to the study of Nature to justify and prove his own impressions of her. For there is no beauty but what is based on truth, and to discover the truth the originals of things alone are satisfactory evidences: all professed amateurship in Art is mere

pretension and dilettantism, without this solid and reliable basis. To exemplify—suppose a landscape painting, genuine and truthful, to be under critical inspection by two individuals, one of whom has been a close observer and student of Nature in her ever-varying moods, and of the wide circle of the natural sciences; while the knowledge of the other has been obtained through sketch books and picture galleries—the latter, enjoying and judging by arbitrary conventional rules, the former, seeing on the canvas, not only what other artists have wrought before, with more or less fidelity; but seeing, as he must, the very sky and meadow, and the familiar tree, with its recognizable and friendly branches, under which he himself has lain, gazing up into the very clouds that float over the pictured scene. He knows at a glance the genus and botanical history of the inviting tree; the distinctive grain and structure of the bark, and the formation of every twig and leaf, is to him as familiar as the sight of the nightly recurring stars or the morning sunrise. He sees the light playing upon the grass, each blade-point quivering, with the fullness of summer life, through all its fibres, until, in fancy, he actually feels again the dreamy repose of that far off August noon. Meantime his companion talks learnedly of “breadth” and “tone” of “central light” and “Pre-Raphaelitism,” and very likely criticises the peculiar points in the picture which mark the genius of the artist. He may even display a good degree of acquaintance with the various schools with which he compares it; but can he tell whether under just *such a sky* the light and shade would be *so* distributed by Nature on the landscape beneath? or does he only know whether the arrangement is in accordance with the rules of some favorite school or master? Can he say whether the foliage on the trees is disposed as Nature arranges it, at the particular season of the year represented, and if it corresponds in quantity and general appearance with the age and condition of the trunk? or, are the mosses clinging to that peculiar rock the natural product of the locality, and the proper embellishment of the spot? If he cannot answer such questions as these, he enjoys not the spontaneous and original pleasure which the painting is capable of producing, but merely the second-hand satisfaction of appreciating its comparative success as measured by a conventional standard. The due appreciation, then, of a single landscape painting necessarily involves a large amount of positive scientific knowledge—in the one we have supposed, at least, a thorough acquaintance with meteorology, botany, geology, and optics—not a book knowledge merely, but a loving and familiar intimacy with Nature, as developed through the physical laws which these sciences teach.

Thus the love and study of Art, not only tends directly to the development of the perceptive faculties, and their cognate subjects of pursuit and contemplation, but it greatly expands the mind by the number and largeness of these subjects, and particularly induces accuracy of eye, and general mental correctness—as may be perceived, if

we will note the pain experienced by every genuine connoisseur, as faults in composition, incongruities of time and place, or falsities of any kind are perpetrated in artistic representations; and not only in these, but in everything in which beauty and harmony are possible.

Nor is it alone in the woods and fields, in the open country, with birds and flowers, foliage and mosses, rocks and earth, atmosphere and water—Nature in general and detail, that the amateur must be at home and completely fraternized: the necessary circle of his knowledge widens as his ambition grows; to him who would exclude himself from none of the departments of Art, the range is ever expanding. For landscape painting a knowledge of isothermal influences and of physical geography is as indispensable as that of geology, botany, ornithology, or entomology, and for want of this, how many fanciful and imaginary scenes are misinterpreted as possessing a “local habitation and a name” which never had any other than such as the brain and hand of the artist were capable of furnishing. In the smallest collection of either sculpture or paintings, there is always to be found a demand for some knowledge of positive and comparative anatomy, while he who is ambitious of connoisseurship in marine painting, adds at once a whole empire to his Art-domain.

In other departments the amateur is driven to the study of architecture, and the political and social life of various and widely distant nationalities; that thus he may learn from the civil and domestic history of the people, the interior life of the men and women of other climes, with whom the artist seeks to make him acquainted—to judge justly of the success of such a work, the critic should be familiar with the passions and predominant feelings of the races, and hence with their fitting expression. And here, too, not a little information may be required in regard to antiquities, and still more frequently a knowledge of mediæval life and Art-history. A still larger field is opened in the necessary study of theology, as applied to paintings, sculptures, and the decorations of church edifices and religious houses. Without a good understanding of the various phases which the Christian church has passed through, the whole wealth of mediæval Art is, in its truest and fullest meaning, shut up from the observer; for, however naturally acute he may be, much in this department must necessarily be altogether meaningless to him, if unexplained by a knowledge of the scholastic questions of the times which produced them, and which have so deeply and permanently impressed themselves upon the Art-history of succeeding eras. Here then is a subject most intimately connected with the “Fine Arts,” which is large enough to excite the interest, and pique the attention of the most cultivated intellect. Through how many lands and ages, through how many heresies and schisms, through how many series of elevations and degradations of the human mind, does this one handmaid of Art, Iconography, conduct us?

What shall we say, then, to the men of uses—the “prac-

tical men," who look with contempt upon the lovers of Art, as devotees to unprofitable and effeminate pursuits; but, that misunderstanding the whole drift and compass of Art, they limit it, by their own ignorance of its bearings—unknowing that its study is most intimately connected with, and opens the way to nearly every other intellectual pursuit; for it is scarcely possible to name a scientific or (conventionally) "useful" study in which Art either has not, or may not find its proper pabulum. Art is all-seeing and all-embracing in its very nature, and, like genius, can be applied to the most common and ordinary affairs of life, as well as to its extraordinary developments; and to come home at once to the feelings and understanding of the most exacting advocate of uses, we affirm, that Art, where its *spirit* is thoroughly appreciated, is one of the greatest promoters of domestic comfort. One of its first laws, like that of Heaven, is order, and order is the corner stone of domestic comfort. Not only in the selection or planning of the dwelling, but in all the exterior and interior appointments—in the arrangement of furniture, even in the style of the table and the daily dress, there is continually opening appropriate spheres for the exercise of a true artistic taste. Nor is it necessary to this end that we possess a "palatial residence" or the means of a millionaire. Indeed, with ample means, artistic taste may in this day be bought, and so our own share be less important (if we have the good sense to submit to better guidance), but it is to those whose means are limited, and to whom economy is a necessity, that aesthetic tastes are most valuable, enabling them to overcome by judgment in selection and arrangement, the necessary deficiencies occasioned by limited expenditure, and the absence of rich and costly ornaments. It is not the expensiveness of a home, but its adaptation to its legitimate purposes, that makes its comfort, and that is *most home*, which most nearly fulfills the idea of repose and social freedom—where the eye may always rest on some form, however simple, of beauty, and general order and harmony prevail. In fact, our daily observation compels us to the conclusion, that it is to a practical repudiation of all aesthetic effects in household appointments, that so much dissatisfaction, weariness, and disgust is manifested by such large numbers of persons—especially young men, with the companions and entertainments of home. Nor is this surprising; a uniform neglect, and practical contempt for all efforts at satisfying the natural instinct for the beautiful, produces this alienation, as a perfectly legitimate and natural result. Nor ought those to expect to enjoy their homes who do nothing, and never have done anything to make them attractive.

Did those who have the control of household arrangements realize how much attraction there is in a home, made to express in its order taste and harmony all that it is capable of; did they know how the world-weary heart may be cheered through the eye and ear, and perceived the force of those attractions which may be thrown around the family circle by the systematic gratification of the

aesthetic instincts, or cultivated tastes of its different members, there would, we believe, be much less frequently found in our American homes a neglect of those simple means within the reach of all, for improving and beautifying that portion of life which is identified with its nearest and most sacred relations.

A name never proves a lasting substitute for an entity—if the actual thing does not exist which the word symbolizes, a mere phrase is the most impotent of influences. And can that household fulfill the most important uses of a home in which the harmony of the true and the beautiful is habitually neglected? Most surely not, the eye and the heart will ever wander either from disorder, or monotonous conventionalities, and seek their entertainment in whatever paths promise to furnish the lacking nutriment. Nor, as some may apprehend, do true artistic tastes lead to the cultivation of the fanciful and *merely* beautiful at the expense of the useful—this is far from true; an enlightened taste always tends, in practical life, to the harmonizing of convenience and appearance, and to the utter annihilation of all shams and pretences; for nothing is so abhorrent to pure Art as falsities; while nothing certainly is so destructive of comfort as social untruths. Truth is the basis of Art, as Beauty is its superstructure, and they are false worshippers who substitute any phantom appearances, where realities should be.

Art, then, in its widest sense, comprehends within its limits not only the whole circle of the sciences, but embraces in its ample folds the very social life of the people; making mere physical existence more desirable wherever it is loved and welcomed. It embraces Nature in her every mood; it reaches back through the ages to the earliest historic periods, and draws thence its subject and materials—filling the eye of the present with the noblest actions of the past: it leaves no race, age, or clime unpictured, and weaves into its fairy folds, the fantastic imaginings of the poetic dreamer, with the stern facts of the didactic moralists: Science works for it, and the mathematical plodder, and the cold staidian, are but storehouses, subject to its unlimited drafts: the warrior, on his fiery steed, faces the grim front of death, that Art may set forth the horrors of war in the galleries of peaceful cities; it follows the mariner on his boldest adventures, and brings to shore the wonders of the watery world in tempest and in calm, and fixes in marble forever the terrible doings of the sea, as it casts from its bosom on the rocky shores, the "shipwrecked mother" and her child: in every field, in every street, and in every cathedral aisle stand models for the pencil; for the uses of Art, the schoolmen wrangle, and straightway polemics appear in concrete form on the canvas; and, by its aid, statesmen and churchmen, the high ecclesiastical dignity, and the crooning monk of centuries past, become the familiars of our modern lives. The ugliness of vice, the beauty of goodness, the fascinations of love, the passion of ambition, and the wrongs of power, are all ready threads in the web, with which Art encompasses the world.

Neither is the value of Art-study to be measured by the mere amount of positive acquirements which is demanded of its devotees; but by that which makes its chief value—*its power of acting as a general inciter to mental activity and intellectual cultivation.*

But Art is not exhausted by the material and intellectual spheres. The world itself is too narrow to illustrate its entirety; for Art transcends the present and the physical to give us intimations of the future, and glimpses of the supernatural and divine: it *uses* the material, but it *suggests* the spiritual. In its essence it corresponds to the whole nature of man; delighting not only the senses, but informing the intellect, and ministering to his highest spiritual needs. And seeing that Art is but the development or creation of Beauty—its integral parts being symmetry, harmony, and fitness—how directly does a familiarity with its perfectness of aim, lead to the growth of that interior life of Beauty (which is the highest beauty of which we can conceive), the beauty of perfect truth and goodness. For what of symmetry and fitness is there in filling the eye with forms of loveliness; in rearing for our temporary habitations structures upon the purest models; in arraying the person in faultless garments of graceful fold and harmonious hue, while the soul within is the home of tempestuous passions, mean and sordid vices, falseness, disorder, and unrest? Where is the harmony which should exist between the exterior and the interior life, if the beauty of Truth is not the element on which the soul is growing up into a divine symmetry and loveliness? And this we believe to be the true influence of Art, where it is received in its genuineness and wholeness: it permeates the whole nature, promoting not only the proprieties and courtesies of life, but harmonizing the internal nature with its essential conditions of existence; enabling the soul which feels its power, to perceive and maintain its *fitting*, and therefore *true* relations, to all divine and human things.

As our positive knowledge is increased, so, but in more rapid proportion (where the æsthetic instinct is strong) is our taste and imagination; and these ever urge us to attempt to fill up in our own lives, what we find there deficient, and to remodel what is incongruous—not only in the arrangements of our social organisms, but even in Nature herself. We would not be misunderstood; with Nature as a whole we can find no fault, for we are not competent to judge of it, “our human vision being limited to so small a portion at any one time;” but in these little patches and parts of Nature which come directly under our eye, and to a great extent under our control, it is no presumption if we assume to bring them into a nearer accordance with what the imagination can conceive of beauty, and in unison with what the cultivated eye really demands.

It is, then, in this determinate impulse towards a universal development of beauty and harmony, which the love and study of Art, so materially quicken, that we find the highest, as well as the most common and practical benefits

arising from it. And hence, as the genuine love of Art increases, shall we see its influence exerted upon every part of the interior and exterior life—and an earnest seeking, to bring *all things* into a beautiful order and harmony with each other. No less comprehensive than this, is the domain of Art. E. V. S.

PAUL REMBRANDT.

BY ALFRED DES ESSARTS.

(Translated for THE CRAYON, by Miss Harriette Fanning Read.)

I.

IN the year 1606, in the village of Leydendorp, on the banks of the Rhine, lived a miller named Gerretsz: his mill was well known, and, thanks to the river, always active. The poor folks of Leydendorp and Koukerk brought their grain to him, and his reputation extended even to Leyden, which, however, was not very distant. Thus Gerretsz possessed a satisfactory number of bags of ducats, which he counted over at evening with his wife, Cornelia van Suidbroeck. At the supper-hour it was sometimes necessary to go in search of a third person, whom we will designate by his baptismal name—Paul Rembrandt.

“I would bet now,” said the miller, “that scamp is off looking at the willows and reeds. Now, I ask you, wife, what pleasure there can be in staring from root to top at a few old gnarled and twisted trees, and at those reeds, which are good for nothing but to hinder the boats?”

“It is certainly very odd; but I think if he were at work, he would forget the willows and stumps. I wish he were big and strong enough to help you.”

“Wife,” interrupted Gerretsz, “I’ve a plan in my head;” and here, to get up his eloquence, he lighted his pipe. At the same moment the door was opened; a young boy entered somewhat timidly, cap in hand, and seemed to expect a scolding; but the father said, with an encouraging smile, “Well, Rembrandt, here you are at last.”

“Excuse me father, but”—

“Very well, very well; we can talk over the cheese and herrings;” so the household drew up their wooden seats to a downright Dutch supper. Gerretsz kept silence for some time; he was preparing his discourse. At last he began.

“My son, you are getting tall; you are in good health, and it delights me. With good health we can work, and work drives off idle fancies, makes us useful, and brings us wealth. You understand? For my part, the mill thrives; the wheel turns,—money comes; so I can think of you, and the pursuit you should take up.”

Encouraged by this good-natured tone, Rembrandt exclaimed, “Oh, my dear father, don’t trouble yourself about that! I am happy here; our villages are so pretty, and such a little satisfies my eyes—a thicket, a plant, a pond; the canal and its boats, the green meadows, with the cows and sheep—”

“Pshaw, pshaw!” interrupted the miller; “a fine occu-